

News

fire information

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Hidden Wildland Fire Evening Update

St. George—A Color Country Interagency Fire Type III Incident Management Team is currently managing the “Hidden Fire” burning on the Arizona Strip approximately 25 miles southeast of Mesquite, Nevada. As of Sunday evening, the lightning-caused fire was approximately 15,000 acres in size. The fire, burning on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Arizona State Lands, began Saturday July 9, 2011. No structures are threatened in this remote location; the closest structure is the BLM Pakoon Fire Station located approximately one mile southeast of the fire. Helicopters are using the Pakoon Fire Station’s water tanks as a dip site to help manage the fire.

The “Hidden Fire” is burning primarily in cheatgrass and within a region that was previously burned by wildfire during the 2005 “Cow Fire,” which burned approximately 30,000 acres. Compared to other vegetation types, wildland fire travels more rapidly in cheatgrass. The Type III Incident Management Team managing the fire includes a variety of interagency resources with seventeen engines, three hand crews, one dozer, five seats, and four helicopters. As of Sunday evening the fire was 20 percent contained.

While rains traveled through the region Sunday morning, fire managers say the precipitation wasn’t enough to affect the fire. “Although this afternoon’s increased relative humidity or moisture in the air has allowed our crews to use a direct attack method with aircraft helping to minimize the acreage burned in critical tortoise habitat within the Mojave ecosystem, we’ll have to wait and see how it plays out tonight,” said Arizona Strip District Fire Duty Officer Shawn Jaca. Resources from throughout the Color Country Interagency Fire Management area are currently staffing the fire. Crews will continue to work towards containment throughout the night. Resources from outside of the Color Country area have also been requested to serve as backup for any other fires that may occur.

Logistically, the fire is currently burning in a remote region of the Arizona Strip but terrain poses some challenges to firefighters. “The topography of this fire is steep and rugged which limits the use of engines to existing road systems,” said Arizona Strip District Fire Management Officer Mark Rosenthal. “We are working to contain the fire within the footprint of the previously burned area of the Cow Fire,” Rosenthal said.

For More Information: *For more information on fire activity in southwestern Utah, the public can call the Color Country Fire Information Hotline at 1-866-447-1283. For more information on wildland fires burning in Arizona go to: <http://wildlandfire.az.gov/>. For more information on fires in Utah visit www.utahfireinfo.gov. For more information on fires across the country, visit www.inciweb.org.*